



# EPISCOPAL NEWS SERVICE

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91127

## **Episcopal Communicators share the joy and pain of their 'holy occupation'**

**by James Thrall**

When 110 Episcopal Communicators gathered in New York City for their annual meeting, it was to share the joy but also some of the pain of their particular role in the church. While honoring members for outstanding work in the past year, the group also participated in workshops dealing with pressing issues such as censorship, rising costs, and how to handle sexual scandals.

The organization, comprised of professionals who have communication responsibilities in print and electronic media on the national and diocesan level, chose as its theme this year, "Holy Occupation: Church Communicators as Heralds." As with anything holy, however, it was clear throughout the meeting that the occupation has both light and dark moments.

"We love good news, and we love the people who bring good news," said Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning in his homily at the opening Eucharist for the communicators at the Episcopal Church Center. "Those who bring what does not seem to be good news may be putting themselves at risk," he added.

"My idea of bad news might be your idea of good news--that is why we so desperately need to listen to one another, to keep the conversations going," holding up "the value of discussion so that the deep truth can be found--so that the good news at the heart of our story comes through. Good news can prevail," Browning concluded. If that happens, "even the bad news can be good in the sense that Good Friday is good when you look at the full story."

The daylong session at the Church Center provided an opportunity for the communicators to meet representatives of various units of the national church, hear plans for news coverage of General Convention, and participate in an open conversation with the presiding bishop.

### **"Something good is happening"**

Browning, who was on his way to the British Embassy in Washington, D.C., for dinner with President George Bush and Queen Elizabeth II, expressed his support and appreciation for communications in the church during a question-and-answer period with the communicators. "I learned early in my episcopate how dreadfully important communications is for the future of the church." He expressed regrets for any "manipulation" of the church press





and urged the communicators to continue telling the truth.

Calling attention to the large number of awards won by Episcopal communicators at the recent Associated Church Press meeting, he said, "I've got to believe something good is happening."

The relationship between bishops and communicators was a recurring topic at the conference, starting with the opening dinner's entertainment. "No News is Good News," a humorous one-act play written by Lucy Germany, editor of the *Texas Episcopalian*. It featured the theatrical talents of communicators and decried censorship by those who want to control certain views or events.

In one of the more dramatic moments of the meeting, the Rev. Stephen R. Weston, former canon for program and communication of the Diocese of Dallas, described his recent dismissal over what he said was a conflict over control of the diocesan newspaper's content. Colleagues showed their sympathy for Weston by giving him a standing ovation.

Michael Barwell, director of communications of the Diocese of Southern Ohio, shared in the presentation titled "Hazards of Holy Occupation," and called for an in-depth workshop at the next annual meeting on how communicators might handle crises and controversies, especially on the diocesan level.

The Rev. Dorsey McConnell, rector of the Church of the Epiphany in New York City and former Episcopal chaplain at Yale University, served as theologian in residence, a position funded for each annual meeting by a grant from the Episcopal Church Foundation.

"How clever of you to stage a communicators' conference on the Eve of Pentecost!" he said. The disciples' experience of miraculously speaking the Gospel and having others hear it in their own languages captures the promise that God will work through the efforts of communicators "so that others can hear."

"The word of grace does this for you, you see," McConnell said, "and the point of it is to relieve from you the burden of trying to get through all the time."

### **Polly Bond Awards for top work last year**

A new format incorporating slide and video presentations of winning entries for the annual Polly Bond Awards added a heightened air of professionalism to the awards dinner held at St. Thomas's Choir School. The awards honor former communicator Polly Bond of the Diocese of Ohio, and acknowledge excellence and achievement in church communications. The visual presentations were prepared by the electronic media staff of the





Episcopal Church Center.

Winners of the coveted General Excellence awards for overall quality of publications were:

- Magazine Division: a tie between *Cathedral Age* and *The Witness*
- Newspaper for Corporate Parish/Cathedral/Agency/Institutions: *The Ascension Banner* of Knoxville, Tennessee
- Newspaper under 12,000 circulation: *The Advocate* of the Diocese of Lexington
- Newspaper over 12,000 circulation: *The Episcopal Times* of the Diocese of Massachusetts.

For electronic media, top awards were:

- Radio Public Service: Trinity Church for "Accomplishment"
- Radio Broadcast: Episcopal Radio and TV Foundation for "Episcopal Series of the Protestant Hour"
- Video Broadcast/Cable: Trinity Church for "A Visit to Morin"
- Video Non-Broadcast/Educational: Washington National Cathedral for "The Consecration of Washington National Cathedral"
- Specialized Media: Washington National Cathedral for "The Dream Realized"

The communicators elected two new board members: Sarah Moore, Diocese of Utah, and Ann Ball, Diocese of Louisiana.

--James Thrall is director of communication of the Diocese of Connecticut.





91128

## **PB's Fund responds to string of natural disasters**

**by Jeffrey Penn**

The Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief has responded to a string of natural disasters in recent weeks, including earthquake, flood, famine, and destruction from fierce windstorms.

Emergency grants by the PB's Fund include relief funds to aid recovery after a cyclone in Bangladesh, April 30, that killed at least 150,000 people; an earthquake in Costa Rica and Panama, April 22, that left more than 100 people dead and several Episcopal churches destroyed; and a deadly tornado in Kansas. The fund is also addressing the continuing plight of famine victims in Ethiopia and the Sudan.

Several Episcopalians were among the Panamanians who died in a major earthquake, which measured 7.5 on the Richter scale, that destroyed bridges and isolated many villages. Five Episcopal churches were destroyed or severely damaged, and hundreds of homes were demolished.

"Conditions in both countries are still tragic," said Bill Caradine of the fund, on his return from a trip to Central America. "Although people are beginning to clean up from the destruction, the long-term needs--like adequate water supply--are still very serious."

Because of the region's poverty, there has been a lack of clean water and medicine, raising threats of a cholera epidemic. Caradine reported that several elderly people had died in Panama following the earthquake from heart attacks and stroke due to the stress of the devastation.

The Presiding Bishop's Fund sent \$15,000 to the Diocese of Costa Rica, where the damage was greatest, and \$10,000 to the Diocese of Panama. Glenda McQueen, diocesan development officer in Panama, said the church's role will involve raising money to help people rebuild. "Obviously, the immediate focus will be on people's homes, not the church buildings," Caradine added.

In Bangladesh, the cyclone, accompanied by hurricane winds and earthquakes, left hundreds of thousands with no water, food, or shelter. The Presiding Bishop's Fund has sent \$25,000 to the Church of Bangladesh and will continue to work with the ecumenical agency Church World Service.

Caradine reported that the fund contributed \$10,000 in emergency aid to the Diocese of Kansas for relief from a string of deadly tornadoes that ripped





through the state in late April.

Continuing civil war in the Sudan, a lengthy drought, and an epidemic of meningitis are threatening the lives of millions of people. John Atkins, who works with the Sudanese church and the Anglican Communion from offices in Kenya, said that the courageous spirit of the Sudanese has not been broken despite their suffering. The fund has sent \$35,000 in hunger aid to Ethiopia and \$100,000 to the church of the province of Sudan.

The Presiding Bishop's Fund for World Relief has installed a 24-hour, toll-free number: 1-800-488-0087. Information is available for specific needs throughout the world and donation procedures, as well as for grant application.

--*Episcopal Life* staff contributed to this report.

91129

## **Presiding bishop joins in welcome for Queen Elizabeth II**

During her two-week visit to the United States, the Episcopal Church found several occasions to greet Queen Elizabeth II, head of the Church of England and Defender of the Faith.

President George Bush invited Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning to join the official party that greeted the queen and her entourage on their arrival in Washington, D.C., May 14. The presiding bishop and his wife, Patti, were guests at a state dinner at the White House that evening.

The Brownings were also guests at a dinner for the queen at the British Embassy, where the presiding bishop offered the blessing, praying especially for "all whose lives are closely linked with ours." In a brief conversation with the queen, Browning said they talked about her first encounter with American baseball. "The queen said that the game was very exciting--with a packed stadium and lots of cheering and booing," Browning reported. "She said the most exciting thing was when a man hit the ball down the white line and it curved left so it didn't count--leading to a great deal of booing. And the queen marveled that one man alone made the decision that it didn't count."

On May 17 the queen and Prince Philip visited Washington National Cathedral, where they greeted schoolchildren, members of the cathedral staff,





and an ecumenical delegation. During a short prayer service, Bishop Ronald Haines asked for blessings for the queen "that she may fulfill her calling as a Christian ruler" and that the Commonwealth "may be knit together in one great family, a strength and joy to all its members and an instrument of peace in our troubled world."

The last time the queen visited the cathedral was in 1976, when she joined President Gerald Ford for the dedication of the cathedral nave to reconciliation of the peoples of the world.

91130

## **New York City homeless find a new home, thanks to church-state cooperation**

A gathering of church officials, neighborhood residents, city and state political leaders, and homeless citizens celebrated the opening on May 17 of the Frederic Fleming House, a new home for the elderly homeless in Manhattan.

The recently renovated, permanent residence, which will house 47 men and women over the age of 60, is considered a success story for the collaborative efforts of public and private organizations to address the problem of homelessness.

"The Frederic Fleming House is a splendid example of Trinity's partnership with local community government and other agencies to address major human needs in the city, and Trinity became the agent that brings together the need and the response," said the Rev. Charles Cesaretti, Trinity Church's deputy for special parish studies.

"Trinity's involvement in the project began more than five years ago when New York began moving away from the idea that it should put up housing and started looking for a way to provide funding and the mechanism for other groups to do it," Cesaretti added. "Trinity saw itself as an agent for that process and began working with the neighborhood block associations and other community groups to meet the need."

In addition to church, municipal, and state cooperation, other organizations contributed to the success of the project. Furniture was donated by Hilton Hotels, and the U.S. Coast Guard contributed freestanding





wardrobes for the newly renovated rooms.

Although the opening celebration included tributes from representatives of Governor Mario Cuomo and Mayor David Dinkins, Manhattan Borough President Ruth Messinger greeted the formerly homeless--now new residents of the Frederic Fleming House: "You are, without a doubt, the most important group here today," she said.

One highlight of the festivities was the presentation of a poster-sized "check" for \$2.9 million by Angelo J. Aponte, commissioner of the New York State Division of Housing and Community Renewal, to the Rev. Daniel Paul Matthews, rector of Trinity Parish. The check represented one of two grants providing principal funding from the State of New York to the Frederic Fleming Housing Development Fund Corporation.

The corporation turned over the management of the house to the West Side Federation for Senior Housing, a nonprofit corporation that will operate and maintain the facility. Operating costs will be provided by the resident's Social Security incomes and from the city.

The Frederic Fleming House is named after the 12th rector of Trinity Parish, who served during the Depression. Fleming was chosen as a namesake for the project, according to Trinity officials, because he was particularly concerned for poor and homeless, and used Trinity Parish property as distribution centers for food and clothing.

91131

## **Bomb thrown at bishop's house may be related to struggle over Indian rights**

A midnight bombing, May 14, at Bishop Craig Anderson's home in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, may have been an angry reaction to Anderson's efforts on behalf of Sioux land claims in the Black Hills, the bishop said.

Anderson, his wife, and their two daughters were upstairs asleep when the bottle bomb exploded near the house's front window. The blast rocked Anderson's 14-year-old daughter out of her bed in a front bedroom, the bishop said. No one was injured.

Anderson wants a commission to study the issue because the Lakota, part of the Sioux Nation, have rejected a \$105 million award to settle their claim,





and seek only the land in the Black Hills that once was theirs. Opponents of restoring the land to the Sioux say the issue was settled by a 1980 U.S. Supreme Court ruling that affirmed the financial award.

"This is a case of the stronger party dictating a settlement to the weaker one," Anderson said. "The church should serve as a mediating agency in empowering the dispossessed."

Anderson had recently written Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning about the "angry backlash" of sentiment about his request that Sen. Daniel Inouye, (D-Hawaii), chairman of the U.S. Senate's Select Committee on Indian Affairs, consider forming a study group to give all sides of the dispute a chance to discuss the matter.

"It's widely known that I've been calling for this," Anderson said, noting that the negative reaction to his proposal was highlighted in the local press. "I just can't help but think the bombing is related to it."

About 20,000 Lakota, about one-third of the Sioux Nation in South Dakota, are Episcopalians. "We're the only place in the country where we are the major religious denomination," the bishop said.

Anderson said that he and his family were frightened by the attack, but hoped it would prove an isolated incident. "We're not going to let this run our lives," he said.

--by *Episcopal Life* staff

91132

## **EURRR's controversial phone campaign garners funds for General Convention strategy**

by Michael Barwell

Episcopalians United for Revelation, Renewal, and Reformation (EURRR) may have amassed as much as \$125,000 during a controversial telephone soliciting campaign earlier this year.

The campaign was a "tremendous success," said the Rev. Todd Wetzel, executive director of EURRR. Wetzel said the organization's goal was to contact 45,000 people who are opposed to the ordination of homosexuals and



the use of inclusive language, and who want the church to focus on evangelism and renewal. Of the 35,8000 people contacted, Wetzel said, "3,600 donated to our ministry."

Wetzel was cautious in giving a total of funds collected, saying that "people are still contributing. But my guess is that we got \$30 to \$35 per completed call--and that's good for a first-time contact." He added that "little of the money will be spent on administrative expense." Instead, the funds, both in pledges and cash, will be "largely devoted to program."

EURRR came under fire last winter for using professional telephone solicitation for a fund-raising drive to amass a "war chest" for General Convention expenses. Some recipients of the telephone calls said they found the solicitors rude and deceptive. In a telephone interview from his Cleveland office, Wetzel said that about 1.5 percent of calls were not productive, because the caller did not follow the script, was rude, or overly aggressive.

"We attempted to trace as many of those calls as possible," Wetzel said, "and we called back and apologized." He added that many of those accepting the apology ended up contributing to the campaign.

Wetzel said the primary issue facing General Convention "is biblical authority and how the uniqueness of Christ comes to focus on sexuality issues and new inclusive [liturgical] texts." He characterized supporters of EURRR as "predominantly moderate mainstream Episcopalians who are concerned that biblical authority of the Episcopal Church is being undercut and eroded."

"We're going to be a presence at General Convention--a very constructive presence," Wetzel said of EURRR's plans for Phoenix. "Episcopalians United is not working for any divisive force in the church. We're going into convention with strong program and ministry," he continued. "We've secured a large booth, [and have] gathered large numbers of volunteers."

91133

## **New archbishop of Canterbury plans first official visit to U.S. next fall**

The first official visit to the United States by the new archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. George Carey, will be a 10-day whirlwind tour including





national and diocesan events across the country.

"We want to give him a wide exposure to the life of our church," said the Rev. Patrick Mauney, deputy for Anglican affairs of the Episcopal Church, who is coordinating the trip on behalf of the presiding bishop. Mauney said the archbishop couldn't possibly respond to all the invitations and, within the context of obvious limitations on his time, is trying to honor longstanding requests.

Following his arrival on September 9, Carey will join the House of Bishops on the last day of its meeting in Baltimore on September 10. The next day he will inaugurate a new lay institute in Washington, D.C., sponsored by Trinity Parish of New York. Carey then returns to Maryland to join the diocese in celebrating a 200th anniversary. On Sunday, September 13, the archbishop will preach at Washington National Cathedral and may meet with political leaders.

Archbishop Carey will be the guest of the Diocese of Southern Ohio on September 14 before flying to Seattle for several days. During his time in the Diocese of Olympia, Carey will participate in a Province of the Pacific event and visit parishes.

The Carey party will fly to Albuquerque, New Mexico, where the archbishop will address the convention of the Diocese of the Rio Grande. On his return to New York, Carey will be awarded an honorary degree from General Theological Seminary. He may also dedicate a Compasrose, symbol of the Anglican Communion, at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City. The Compasrose was designed by the late subdean of the cathedral, Canon Edward West.

"The archbishop is still working out the details of his visit, but the excitement is building, and we look forward to his visit," Mauney said.







## *news briefs*

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91134

### **Moderate Baptists coalesce into independent group**

Prompted by the decade-long success of fundamentalists to control the 14-million-member Southern Baptist Convention (SBC), 6,000 of the denomination's more moderate members have formed an independent organization that, for the foreseeable future, will define itself within denominational boundaries. The Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, as the new group is known, was fashioned during a three-day meeting in Atlanta, May 9-11. It plans to develop programs in several areas, including missionary work, educational materials, and seminaries. The Rev. John Hewett, pastor of the First Baptist Church in Asheville, North Carolina, and moderator-elect of the fellowship, said that individual Baptist churches, which are self-governing, would now have "one more choice" when deciding where to direct or solicit funds. In a prepared statement, the fellowship distanced itself from a number of conservative tenets--including the literal interpretation of the Bible--that have marked the SBC's decision-making bodies. "The Bible neither claims nor reveals inerrancy as a Christian teaching," the fellowship statement said. The fellowship said it anticipates a working relationship with the Associated Baptist Press, which was created last year after conservatives assumed tight control over the official Baptist Press. Women comprise a majority in the fellowship's governing council. The SBC is the largest Protestant denomination in the United States. To date, only 211 of the SBC's 37,700 congregations have aligned themselves with the emerging group.

### **Lutheran Church initiates staff cutbacks**

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) has eliminated 16 staff positions, and nine others will be dropped through attrition as part of its effort to cut 1991 spending by \$5.2 million. "Whole programs and areas of



ministry have been severely affected by these reductions," said Bishop Herbert Chilstrom of the ELCA. Five positions were eliminated from the Office for Ecumenical Affairs, seven from the Division for Congregational Life, and eight from the Office of the Secretary.

### **Irish-American priest denounces a British law**

A U.S. priest has characterized Queen Elizabeth II as a symbol and tacit promoter of legalized anti-Roman Catholic discrimination. Father Sean McManus, a Redemptorist priest and native of Northern Ireland, linked Elizabeth II to the British law, enacted in 1700, that prohibits a British monarch from being a Roman Catholic or having a Roman Catholic spouse. McManus, the organizer of a demonstration in Washington protesting the queen's May 15 visit, also wrote to Episcopal Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning requesting that the church "use its good influence" to have the law rescinded. "As queen of Northern Ireland, Elizabeth has a moral obligation to refuse to rule under this unjust law," McManus told Browning. Sectarian violence in Northern Ireland has taken 2,850 lives over the last 20 years.

### **Joan Campbell installed as NCC general secretary**

The Rev. Joan Campbell was installed as the seventh general secretary of the National Council of Churches (NCC) on May 14 during a three-hour service of celebration and dedication at the Riverside Church in New York City. Campbell, a noted ecumenist, had served as director of the U.S. office of the World Council of Churches since 1985. She is the second woman and the first woman minister to lead the council, having been ordained in both the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and the American Baptist Churches. Addressing those in the pews, Campbell said, "The task of our time is to live courageously, strengthen the bonds of unity...even as we are called to advocate our diversity." Earlier in the day, Native Americans hosted a pre-installation worship service for Campbell and gave her an Indian name meaning "woman with many friends."

### **Ordination of Lutheran on hold over homosexuality issue**

A second-year seminarian who found his candidacy for ordination thwarted by a committee of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) has vowed--as a last resort--to seek an "irregular" ordination in a congregation more open to his views on homosexuality. An ELCA synodical candidacy committee refused in late March to support the ministerial candidacy of Bill Kunisch three months after he publicly challenged ELCA policies prohibiting the ordination of practicing homosexuals. At the request of





Kunisch, the denomination's Division for Ministry is reviewing whether the synodical committee applied proper procedures in their assessment of his candidacy. Kunisch had refused the committee's request that he endorse the ELCA ordination requirement that sexual relations be limited to the state of marriage, characterizing the committee's line of questioning as an "arbitrary action" that implies "harassment of people they think are gay or lesbian."

### **Americans tailor God to suit their needs, Gallup says**

American Christians do not differ appreciably in their ethical behavior from non-Christians, according to George Gallup, the noted pollster who is also an Episcopal layman. Speaking at an urban ministries conference in Newark, New Jersey, Gallup pointedly referred to a survey that asked American theists to rank 19 social values in terms of personal importance. In the view of those polled, following God's will came "far down the list... behind happiness and satisfaction." Gallup added that another poll showed that teenagers viewed religious faith as the least important of eight personal attributes, including patience and hard work. Americans "want the fruits of faith but not the obligations," Gallup concluded. "[Their] God is often only an affirming one, not a demanding one...", Gallup said. "[Americans] pray, but often...with the emphasis on asking, not on thanksgiving, petition, or intercession for others."

### **John Paul II offers thanks on a visit to Fatima**

The pope made clear during a recent visit to Fatima, Portugal, that he continues to maintain a special relationship with the Virgin Mary. Addressing the Virgin of Fatima during a speech to a crowd of 300,000 well-wishers, John Paul II said, "I felt your saving presence beside me." The pope was referring to the 1981 incident in St. Peter's Square when he was seriously wounded by a Turkish gunman. The assassination attempt was carried out on the Day of Our Lady of Fatima, commemorating the alleged 1917 appearance of the Virgin Mary to three shepherd children. John Paul II has often credited the Virgin Mary with interceding to save his life. He also visited the shrine at Fatima on the first anniversary of the shooting, and again escaped possible death. On that occasion a disturbed Spanish priest with a large knife was taken into custody in his vicinity. The pope marked the tenth anniversary of the attempt on his life with a special memento. He placed the bullet that doctors retrieved from his body in a diamond-studded crown worn by a statue symbolizing the Virgin.





## **Polish parliament rejects anti-abortion bill**

On the eve of Pope John Paul II's visit to his Polish homeland, the parliament in Poland voted by a three-to-two margin to defeat a bill calling for a total ban on abortions. Poland's Roman Catholic bishops had strenuously lobbied for passage of the legislation in the face of surveys indicating that 60 percent of the nation's citizens opposed the measure. The parliament, in a gesture of compromise, instead adopted a nonbinding resolution that urged an end to abortions by private doctors, while endorsing a program of sex education and upgraded medical assistance for unwed mothers. Private abortions are sometimes preferred in Poland because such procedures--in contrast to those of state hospitals--do not become part of the public record. It is now widely anticipated that the week-long visit of the pope, due to begin June 2, will embolden a campaign against pro-choice legislators. The abortion issue is expected to remain in the political spotlight for parliamentary elections, slated for the fall. One million abortions are performed a year in the predominantly Roman Catholic country, a figure equal to the number of yearly births.

## **Episcopal bishop compares Israeli and Nazi tactics**

Bishop Charles Vache of the Diocese of Southern Virginia has come under fire from Jewish leaders after comparing Israel's treatment of Palestinians to early Nazi tactics of genocide against Jews. Vache, who recently returned from his sixth trip to Israel and the occupied territories, said U.S. [economic and political] support of Israel's repressive measures compromises our own "moral integrity." Any comparison of the Israelis and Nazis is "ludicrous," retorted Ira Gissen, the director of the regional office of the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith. "The churches were actively teaching contempt [in the late '30s and early '40s], which created the climate in which the Holocaust was possible," Gissen said. Vache countered with what he perceived as a primary lesson of the Holocaust: the immorality of silence. "Who are the terrorists? Those who shoot bullets or those who throw stones?" Vache asked, referring to the Israeli army's response to the pro-independence demonstrations that have marked the Palestinian uprising, now in its fourth year. "Palestinians are asking that we speak out," said Vache; "I can't sit on it any longer."

## **Anglo-Catholics urge progress by consensus in Phoenix**

The Catholic Fellowship of the Episcopal Church, an organization of clergy and lay Episcopalians who consider themselves within the Catholic tradition in Anglicanism, has issued a cautionary note on the eve of General



Convention in Phoenix. Addressing the bishops of the Episcopal Church and the "difficult task" awaiting them in July, the fellowship noted, "The coming General Convention shows signs of being co-opted by interest groups representing conservative and liberal parties." It appealed to the bishops to consider several resolutions that, the fellowship argued, would help maintain a consensus between those guided by the prophetic or the pastoral. In particular, the resolutions urged "that the appropriateness of candidates for ordination be left to the determination of the canonically responsible authorities: the bishops, standing committees, and commissions on ministry in their respective dioceses; and that the church acknowledge the life and ministry of homosexual persons among its bishops, clergy, and laity."

### **Polish primate "accepts" church-state separation**

The Roman Catholic Church in Poland has distanced itself from its recent call for an end to constitutional guarantees separating church and state, a move that could have installed Roman Catholicism as Poland's state religion. Speaking in a nationally televised sermon, Poland's Roman Catholic primate, Cardinal Jozef Glemp, said, "The church and state stand on different levels [and] should be independent from each other, but somehow bound to cooperate for the benefit of man. If such autonomy is called separation, that is acceptable," Glemp said. While Poland is overwhelmingly Roman Catholic, surveys have shown that support for the church has declined there due to the church's vocal efforts against abortion and for the introduction of religious instruction into public schools.

### **Rio Grande forges link with Persian Gulf Anglicans**

The Diocese of the Rio Grande has entered a "companion-diocese arrangement" with the Anglican Diocese of Cyprus and the (Persian) Gulf, following a visit by the Rt. Rev. John Brown, bishop of Cyprus and the Gulf, to New Mexico last November. The agreement takes effect later this year, and entails both financial assistance and "prayer and fellowship."

### **Methodist-Roman Catholic dialogue issues fifth report**

A joint commission of the World Methodist Council (WMC) and the Roman Catholic Church last month presented its fifth in a series of reports aimed at closing the gap between the two faith groups. The report, "The Apostolic Tradition," took the post-Second Vatican Council dialogue one step further by stressing common tenets, such as the Nicene Creed, and "the degree of communion that both churches already share." The document also played down the two church's differences of approach toward the Eucharist and the





preaching of the Word. "In recent decades," the joint commission asserted, "Methodists are increasingly appreciating the centrality of the Eucharist and [Roman] Catholics the fundamental importance of the preaching of the Word." The report said that full communion between the two faith traditions will depend not only on doctrinal consensus but also "on a fresh creative act of reconciliation that acknowledges the manifold, yet unified activity of the Holy Spirit through the ages." The Vatican will receive the report later this year, and the WMC will take it up when it meets in July in Singapore.

### **White South African bishop apologizes to Namibians**

Anglican Bishop Michael Nuttall of Natal, South Africa, has apologized to a Namibian church congregation for the "terrible things" that white South Africans perpetrated against Namibia. As a "white South African I have to acknowledge my share in the sin of white South Africa, its sin in my own country, its sin in Namibia and Angola, and in other countries of Southern Africa as well," Nuttall said.

### **U.S. officials press China for wider religious freedoms**

In late March, two U.S. congressmen reminded Chinese leaders that the continuance of China's most-favored-nation trading status with the United States will be linked to China's record on religious freedom. Congressmen Chris Smith (R-NJ) and Frank Wolf (R-VA) also delivered a letter to Premier Li Peng requesting the release of 77 Chinese Christians who are currently imprisoned or under house arrest. The letter was signed by 110 members of Congress.

### **Three corrections on preconvention stories**

Three errors in the May 14 Episcopal News Service packet require correction. In the story, "Is the Episcopal Church on the road to racial justice," page 26, paragraph 3, the sentence should read, "Slaughter was part of the manifest destiny of European settlers," Anderson said, until by 1890...(not, 1990 as was written). In the story, "Simmering debate on homosexuality may boil over in Phoenix," please note that Trinity Episcopal School for the Ministry is located in **Ambridge**, Pennsylvania (not in Ambler, as was reported on page 32). And, our colleague, Sarah Moore, still resides in **Utah** and serves as director of communication there, as well as communicator for Province VIII. In our story on the financial crunch hitting the church, we had mislocated her in Idaho.







## news features

*Issues facing the 70th General Convention in Phoenix*

91135

### **Episcopalians will consider differing strategies to deal with the environmental crisis**

**by Jeffrey Penn**

After three years of theological study, the 70th General Convention of the Episcopal Church must now decide how to demonstrate its commitment to the environmental movement.

At the grassroots, Episcopalians across the country have not waited for direction from the national church for guidance in the environmental crisis. Parishes have held workshops on the environment, participated in Earth Day celebrations, and joined in efforts to recycle wastes. Now that the concern has percolated to the highest levels of leadership, the General Convention will confront not only some impatience that the church is moving too slowly on the issue--but also several differing strategies to respond to the environmental crisis.

One proposal, offered by the Executive Council, would require a serious reorientation by all current structures in the national church to respond to the environmental crisis. It would force the current structures in the church to consider creative approaches to environmental concerns--and then mandate that the structures be held accountable.

Another proposal, offered by the Standing Commission on Human Affairs, would set up a new standing commission and special, separate office for environmental concerns that would prod the church.

A third proposal, offered by a coalition of environmental activists in the church, calls for establishing a separate, presiding bishop's committee on the environment to conduct research and to develop proposals and programs.



While all sides agree that the issue is greater than using ceramic mugs instead of styrofoam cups, or recycling newspapers, already supporters of the various plans are at odds about which strategy would be more effective. The fear is that "this fragile earth, our island home," as it is described in the *Book of Common Prayer*, may be on the path to self-destruction. And the hope is that the church will fashion a corporate response to ecological issues.

Voices of urgency and anticipation--like the ticking of a time bomb, or a clock about to strike midnight--are prodding the church to take a more decisive role in the crisis.

"Where is organized religion on this issue..., and where is the Episcopal Church?" asked the Very Rev. James Parks Morton, dean of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York, and an international environmental activist. "How could it be that a community that has taken such prophetic leadership on issues of human rights, civil rights, peace, and social justice is totally invisible and mute, totally absent from this struggle on which everybody else is moving?"

### **Church's response gathers momentum**

Momentum for the Episcopal Church's response picked up at the 1988 General Convention when a resolution called for a church-wide, comprehensive study on the environment. The convention directed the Executive Council to "give high priority" to the development of a "statement of policy and plan of action regarding stewardship of the global environment" and that the plan "be presented to the 1991 General Convention for approval."

The convention also chose the environment as one of eight mission imperatives for three years, emphasizing the compelling need for the church to "act in faithful stewardship in response to the biblical teaching of the right use of God's creation."

The 1988 Lambeth Conference of Anglican bishops adopted a resolution urging the Anglican Communion to explore the interrelationship of the environmental crisis with militarism, justice, and peace.

In the intervening three years, the international community has focused the world's attention on the environment. The World Council of Churches (WCC) called for a new "theology of creation, redemption and justice." A special conference on Justice, Peace, and the Integrity of Creation of the WCC in Seoul, South Korea, in March 1990, called for "a new vision" that will "integrate our interdependent ecological, social, economic, political and spiritual needs."

In the summer of 1990 the presiding bishop appointed a Consultation on Environment and Sustainable Development to help guide the Executive Council





in preparing a report for the 1991 General Convention. The consultation presented a report to the November 1991 meeting of the Executive Council in New York, saying that "the environmental crisis is a challenge of far greater proportions" than had been anticipated.

"Neglect of land, sky, and water reflects alienation of humans from one another. Inability to understand and acknowledge fully the dimensions of this challenge betrays profound and pervasive fear and denial," the consultation said. "What we face, therefore, is a fundamental human crisis, without precedent, infusing all aspects of our life."

The consultation proposed a plan of action that included establishing an Office of Environment and Sustainable Development, and a new standing commission for the church. Details of the proposal were later endorsed by the church's Standing Commission on Human Affairs, which currently has basic responsibility for environmental issues.

"It won't be enough merely to pass resolutions at General Convention in Phoenix," said Morton, one of the cochairs of the consultation, in his address to Executive Council. He challenged the council to accept the action plan presented by the consultation and pressed for urgent and comprehensive action by the whole church.

### **Executive Council changes plan**

Executive Council commended the consultation for its work, and then directed an ad hoc committee to prepare "a policy and plan, along with a statement of theological basis on the environment and sustainable development" to be presented for action at General Convention in Phoenix.

By the time the ad hoc committee report had reached the Spring 1990 meeting of the Executive Council in Portland, Maine, however, a new plan of action had emerged. It called the church to use existing institutions and structures to mobilize appropriate response at all levels to the environmental crisis.

"Our goal was not to tell the church how to respond, but to engage each other and our government on the issues," said David Beers, a council member who served as chairperson of the ad hoc committee report.

The new plan would engage the church on three levels: the Presiding Bishop's Office, the Executive Council, and a coalition of representatives of the standing commissions of the General Convention.

The council's plan would direct a system-wide reorientation of the presiding bishop's staff at the Episcopal Church Center to environmental concerns within current programs. The Executive Council would establish a special committee on the environment to deal directly with reports and



legislation regarding environmental issues. The new coalition on the environment would serve as a watchdog on the church's policies to ensure that they are a continuing priority--and that the policies are carried out.

According to Beers, the Executive Council plan would be more effective than the original proposal from the consultation, because it would not separate the environment from the entirety of the church's mission. "The real question is how to integrate the concern for the environment with broader peace and social justice issues," Beers said. He told the council that the committee "steadfastly rejected" pressure to separate the environment from other issues facing the church.

### **Opening round of debate begun**

The council's report has already stirred some sharp reaction, suggesting that the debate over the church's strategy in Phoenix may contain as much heat as light.

"The resolution [to be offered by the Executive Council] is very wordy...very bureaucratic and very weak...like an elephant producing a mouse," said Morton. He added that the plan places too much emphasis on already overburdened staff people and distributes authority over too wide an area. "The implementation plan is too diffuse. Nobody really has any authority to do anything."

Morton has organized a coalition to lobby the General Convention for the original plan of the presiding bishop's consultation as put forward in resolutions by the Standing Commission on Human Affairs. In addition, the coalition proposes the establishment of a separate, presiding bishops committee on the environment to make proposals on environmental policy. According to him, the new coalition includes bishops, other clergy, and laity from across the church. The coalition is already planning a national meeting on June 15 to organize strategy leading up to the General Convention. "We will have a booth at convention and are working on strategy to get the Episcopal Church to legislate a very strong environmental program," Morton said.

"They want to lock us into a specific position, whereas what we are trying to say is that we want the whole church to enter the debate," said Beers in response to Morton's proposal. "They [Morton's coalition] want to give specific instructions, with too much emphasis on birds and turtles and styrofoam cups. They show a lack of confidence in the structure of the church and are very heavily weighted toward the traditional environmental groups."

Beers rejected the claim that the church is far behind on the environmental issue. "It is true that some parishes and dioceses are ahead of the national church. But that is the nature of the church," he said. "Policies





are always informed by people at the local level and vice versa. It's a two-way street."

"We have a very good record in the area of environmentally sensitive investments," Beers continued. "We were among the first denominations to file shareholder resolutions on the environment with corporations in the wake of the Valdez oil spill." Yet, Beers admitted, there is room for pressure in the church. "The real pressure should hold the existing structures accountable. We need to help parishes understand that the issue is more than rules about disposable diapers--that there are broader questions about justice at stake."

What the Episcopal Church needs, according to Beers, are people within the structure to connect ecological concerns with the wider mission of the church, and to monitor how the church responds to the environmental crisis. "We must make sure that people continue to ask the questions--and then to assure the structure that 'We'll be watching,'" he said.

--Nellie Blagden, editor of *The Northeast* in the Diocese of Maine, contributed to this report.





# reviews and resources

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## **Photostats of Convention Daily final issue available**

**Editors Alert:** *The Convention Daily*, produced by *Episcopal Life*, is offering photostats of the final eight-page issue that will contain summaries of General Convention legislative actions, roundups of issues and how bishops and deputies dealt with them, and a photo spread of activities. The stats may be sent as is to the printer's as one would send regular boards; these pages could become the center section of a post-Convention issue. Or editors can cut and paste, substituting photos and stories of their own diocesan delegations if they wish to do so. Page dimensions will be 10.5 inches wide by 16 inches deep. The *Daily* will be set in Garamond 10/11 in a 14.03 column--information you will need in substituting stories. Photostats are available for \$65 for the eight-page set and may must be ordered by June 10 from *Episcopal Life*, 815 Second Ave., New York, N.Y. 10017. Send no money--editors ordering photostats will receive an invoice from *Episcopal Life* following General Convention.

## **Convention news will available through "900" number**

"News-by-Phone," a daily report of the news and events of the 70th General Convention of the Episcopal Church, will be available through a "900" number. The phone news reports, offered nationwide for the first time, will be updated daily at 6:00 p.m. (Phoenix time) from July 10 to July 20. The cost will be 90 cents per minute (billed to the caller's phone number). Callers may listen to all or only a portion of the reports. In English, (900) 884-8877. In Spanish, (900) 884-8866. The phone service reporters will be Bruce Brown (English), a radio newscaster and member of the cathedral church in Detroit, and Sonia Francis (Spanish), executive for communication of the national church.

## **Video will summarize convention's legislative work**

"Phoenix 1991 Convention Video Report," a program summarizing the





legislative work of the convention, with video segments from the House of Bishops and House of Deputies, is being produced as a parish education resource. The video will be available in August, and may be ordered from Gary Filsinger, Media Resources Manager, Episcopal Church Center, 815 Second Ave., New York, NY 10017; telephone (800) 334-7626 or (212) 922-5397. The 30-minute video report costs \$29, plus shipping charges.

### **Episcopal Life now on cassette**

*Episcopal Life* is available on cassette for the blind and visually impaired. An annual subscription for the monthly tapes is \$6, the same as the newspaper subscription. The service was initiated by the Rev. Barbara Ramnaraine, a deacon in Minnesota and coordinator of the task force on accessibility for the Episcopal Church. *Episcopal Life* articles will be read by George Day of Edmond, Oklahoma, a deacon in training in the Diocese of Oklahoma. To subscribe, send name and address to *Episcopal Life*, Cassettes, 815 Second Ave., New York, N.Y. 10017. Payment need not accompany your order.

### **Film on living with AIDS virus to air June 18**

*Absolutely Positive*, a film about 11 men and women who explain what their lives are like as they live with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, will make its national television debut on Tuesday, June 18, at 10 p.m. (Eastern Time). The film is directed by Peter Adair, produced by Janet Cole, and edited by Veronica Selver. The broadcast will mark the opening of the fourth season of public television's independent nonfiction film series. Local listings should be consulted to determine the specific channel and viewing time for *Absolutely Positive*.

### **Brotherhood of St. Andrew to gather July 6**

The Brotherhood of St. Andrew, an Episcopal ministry to men, will hold its national convention in Tempe, Arizona, July 6-10. The convention's featured speaker will be Gen. Charles Duke, who piloted *Apollo 16* to the moon, and later, with his wife Dotty, founded the Duke Ministry for Christ in Texas. Other speakers will include Bishop William Wantland of Eau Claire; the Rev. Thomas Phillips, rector of St. Paul's Church, Yuma, Arizona; and the Rev. Richard Farmer, founder of RAF Ministries and dean of the chapel at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. A number of workshops will be offered, on issues ranging from biblical sexuality to leadership training. Founded in 1883, the brotherhood has about 4,000 members in the United States as well as chapters in Japan, the Philippines, Ghana, and Uganda.





## **Week-long "Discovering Canterbury" program in July**

The "Discovering Canterbury" program, scheduled for July 17-24 in Canterbury, England, will offer contemporary pilgrims a taste of what life is like at Canterbury Cathedral. Participants will be lodged within the cathedral's precincts, and a wide variety of the cathedral's social and religious events will be available to them. The dean and canons of the cathedral, scholars, artisans, bell ringers, and musicians will all participate in the program. Also included in the week-long schedule will be visits to sites outside the cathedral, including visits to Leeds Castle and St. Augustine's landing point in England. Enrollment costs \$575, and includes meals, lodging, and many activities. Participants must make their own travel arrangements. Some limited scholarship assistance is available. Registration is by telephone or mail. Registration forms and additional information are available from The Canterbury Cathedral Trust in America, 2300 Cathedral Avenue, N.W., Washington, DC 20008-1505; telephone (202) 328-8788 or (800) 932-2282.

## **New resource for funders and grant seekers**

The Episcopal Mission Resource Information Service has entered information about 21,064 grants--totaling nearly \$30 million--into a computer data base. A *Directory of Funders and 1989-1990 Grants* has been published and is available for \$35 from Mrs. G. Nancy Deepen, Consortium of Endowed Episcopal Parishes, P.O. Box 2884, Westfield, NJ 07091.

